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## The Holy City and Gehenna

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### I

IT is now coming to be more and more admitted that the Biblical identification of Jerusalem with the seat of the future Paradise had its roots in primitive Semitic conceptions which were also common to the Hebrew people.<sup>1</sup> In describing the reign of the righteous king to come, Isaiah (11 6 ff.) paints in idyllic terms the return of Paradise lost to earth; peace will prevail among beasts, and between them and man.<sup>2</sup> Even if v. 9 be, with Duhm and others, a later addition, nevertheless the limitation of the new conditions to Yahwe's "holy mount" is doubtless correct exegesis; Isaiah's Messiah is to rule over his own people, while the rest of the world appears to be ignored (cf. 9 1 ff.).

Another set of references may at first sight appear to be alien, namely those which prospect the future exaltation of Zion, so that it will tower above the mountains, or even be the sole peak in the world. The first canonical reference is Isa. 2 2 (= Mic. 4 1): "And it will be in the last days: Established will be the mount of Yahwe on (as?) the top of the mountains, and it will be lifted up higher than (the) hills."<sup>3</sup> Likewise Ezekiel, in his last vision, is brought to

<sup>1</sup> See A. Jeremias, *Die babylonisch-assyrischen Vorstellungen vom Leben nach dem Tode*, 1887, p. 121; Gunkel, *Genesis*, 1901, p. 31; *Zum religionsgeschichtlichen Verständnis des Neuen Testaments*, 1903, p. 48; Gressmann, *Der Ursprung der israelitisch-jüdischen Eschatologie*, 1905, p. 221.

<sup>2</sup> The authenticity of this passage is now denied by many scholars, e.g. Hackmann, *Die Zukunftserwartung des Jesaja*, p. 149; Cheyne, *Introduction to the Book of Isaiah*, p. 61; Marti, *ad loc.* But this skepticism is to be discounted or held in abeyance in view of the new postulates of Gunkel and his school; see Gressmann, *op. cit.* p. 238.

<sup>3</sup> Duhm, following the Greek, prefers to read: "The mount of Yahwe,

"a mountain exceedingly high" (Eze. 40 2). And Zech. 14 10 foretells the time when "the whole land will be turned into a steppe, from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem, and it (Jerusalem) will be high" (cf. Rev. 21 10).<sup>4</sup> With these passages is to be aligned Ps. 48 3: "Mount Zion, the farthest north,<sup>5</sup> the city of the Great King."<sup>6</sup> This last passage is to be explained from the preceding ones, and also gives the key for them. Already, in idea, Jerusalem is the mountain of the far north, and evidently the Psalmist is possessed by some mythical notions connected with the sanctuary of his people. The preceding passages, apocalyptic in character, look forward to the time when the mystical ideal will be realized.

It is generally recognized that we have here the myth of the mountain of God, or the gods, in the north, a myth not only common to the Semites, as we shall note below, but appearing also in the Hellenic and Teutonic ideas concerning Olympus and Asgard. It is not necessary to discuss here the origin of the myth: whether it is due to the fact that the mountains, the natural seats of the superior gods, generally lay north of the Semitic lands (as also in southern Europe); or whether the earth was regarded as a great mountain sloping up toward the North Pole, an idea that would be suggested

and the house of (our) God," for which the factor of parallelism speaks. But the Hebrew gives proper rhythmical form, while the expression, "mount of the house of Yahwe" (cf. Mic. 3 12) appears to be antique, reminding us of the Babylonian *E-kur*, "house of the mountain." The absence of the article with "hills" probably requires the sense, "so that it will no more be in the category of hills"; see *BDB*, p. 583 *a*.

<sup>4</sup> "A steppe," with Nowack and Marti. But מַרְבֵּה does not have the connotation of a plain, but that of desertedness, hence its specific application to the Ghor; see G. A. Smith, *Historical Geography*<sup>7</sup>, p. 657. The translation of the American Revision, "like the Arabah," *i.e.* the Ghor, is therefore preferable, with the meaning that the land will be lowered to the level of the Ghor.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Isa. 14 13, and see below.

<sup>6</sup> "King" is here a proper name. The expression is not to be compared with the Tyrian מֶלֶךְ קֶרֶת (so Baudissin, *PRE*<sup>8</sup>, xiii. p. 299), but with the title of the Persian monarch, who appears *passim* in Xenophon's *Anabasis* (*e.g.* i. 4, 11) as βασιλεὺς μέγας, — without the article. This correspondence has been overlooked by the commentators.

by the motion about the axis of the earth, and perhaps corroborated by the southerly course of Mesopotamian and other streams; or whether the first cause is to be found in the astral idea of a hill in the heavens, culminating at the celestial pole.<sup>7</sup> Various causes probably worked together; whether the gods were earthly or celestial, their seat should be at the highest point for the sake of their control over all the lands.

Two other references prove that this myth of the mountain of the gods was well known to the Hebrews.<sup>8</sup> The one appears in a dirge entitled "over Babylon," in Isa. 14 4 ff.,<sup>9</sup> namely v. 13: "And thou saidst in thy heart: To the heavens will I mount, above the stars of El will I rear my throne, and I will sit in the Mount of Assembly in the farthest north." It matters not whether with Jensen<sup>10</sup> we deny that there is any exact Babylonian equivalent to this term, the Mount of Assembly in the north. Babylonian theology shows that the superior place for deity, peculiarly for Anu, king and father of the gods, was at the pole of the northern heavens,<sup>11</sup> and comparative mythology reveals the same conception for widely separated peoples. The Mount of Assembly, or rather of Appointment (*rendez-vous*), was the place where the family of divinities gathered, as in the

<sup>7</sup> For this idea of a celestial mount, see Jensen, *Kosmologie der Babylonier*, p. 16.

<sup>8</sup> Yet it is to be observed that they both appear in narratives relating to foreign peoples, and are probably in terms of the respective mythologies of the subjects.

<sup>9</sup> The title is generally admitted to be late, so that the subject could be Assyria, or its king (Sennacherib), and the author Isaiah. See Cobb, *JBL*, 1896, p. 27 ff., who contrasts the opposing views of two such critics as Cheyne and Winckler. See also W. Staerk, *Das assyrische Weltreich im Urteil der Propheten*, 1908, p. 226. "Nach dem Vorgange von Winckler und Cobb denken jetzt auch Jeremias und Wilke mit Recht an einen *assyrischen* König, und unter diesen kann es sich kaum um andere als Sargon oder Sanherib handeln. . . . Es scheint mir mit Sicherheit hervorzugehen, dass *Sanheribs Tod* der Anlass zu diesem ironischen Klageliede gewesen ist."

<sup>10</sup> *Op. cit.* p. 201; as against Jeremias, *op. cit.* p. 59. Also see Jastrow, *Religion of Babylonia and Assyria*, p. 558.

<sup>11</sup> Jensen, *op. cit.* p. 16.

councils of Olympus.<sup>12</sup> The other passage is the equally famous dirge over the prince of Tyre in Eze. 28, who is thus addressed: "Thou wast in Eden, the garden of God" (v. 13); "thou wast upon the holy mountain of God" (v. 14). Now this mountain of God must be the Hill of Assembly in the farthest north. But the additional and valuable datum in this mythological passage is the combination of the mount of God in the north with Eden or Paradise.

It is not my purpose to discuss the various locations for the original Paradise which appear from the first pages of Genesis down to the latest apocalyptists. Indeed, it would be a vast mistake to attempt any harmonious scheme of these myths. Thus, for the Babylonian the Garden could be in the south, in the direction of ancient sacred Eridu, as in the Gilgamesh epic; for the Israelite in the east, on the basis of a prosaic understanding of the geography of Gen. 2; or it could be associated with the west, as the place of the setting sun, and hence of death.<sup>13</sup> The association of Eden with the north, the seat of deity, is, I doubt not, based upon a truly religious conception, that of the community of the believer with his god. If Yahwe was wont to walk at evening in the Garden (Gen. 3 8), his habitat, to simple minds, could not have been far off. If there was a dream of a Paradise for chosen men, the Israelite might conceive of an Enoch as taken by Yahwe to himself to his abode in the mystic north. And so just as in the mythological material of Eze. 28, the Prince of Tyre, who appears to be a transformation of the divine Adam Kadmon, had his dwelling in the north, likewise we find an Assyrian king expressing the hope that the gods "have called his race to the abode upon Eharsag-kurkura," the possible Babylonian equivalent for the Mount of Assembly.<sup>14</sup> The original seat of gods and

<sup>12</sup> Cf. the Divine Assembly, עֲדַת אֱל, Ps. 82 1, and the Council of the Holy Ones, מִסֵּד קִדְשִׁים, Ps. 89 8.

<sup>13</sup> According to Gen. 3 24 (cf. 11 2) Eden lay in the west. For the uncertainty as to its location in the Babylonian mind, see Jeremias, *op. cit.* p. 60.

<sup>14</sup> The quotation, taken from the introduction of Tiglath-Pileser's octagonal cylinder, is given by Jeremias, *op. cit.* p. 98.

the first man in the Mount of the North could thus easily, upon the introduction of spiritual notions concerning immortality, have been regarded as the haven of the elect of the gods when their life here was ended, of kings to the Babylonian mind, of saints to the Hebrew conception.<sup>15</sup>

Ancient mythology, then, had already prepared for the combination of the ideas of the Mount of God and Paradise. Yet another combination lay at hand. To the Syrians the local gods were generally mountain-gods (cf. 1 Ki. 20 23), with their sanctuaries on hilltops, as in the case of Zion. So also in their flat plains the Babylonians built their stage-towers, in artificial imitation of natural elevations, and gave to them names which indicated the fanciful representation of them as mountains, even expressive of the thought that they were identical with the mountain of the world, the mount of the gods. It is in line, then, with common Semitic thought when we find Zion identified with the Mount of God in the farthest north, as is so boldly done in Ps. 48 3.<sup>16</sup> How far religious fervor can go in such prejudices is shown by the Samaritan belief that Gerizim actually is the highest mountain of the world, despite the fact that its neighbor Ebal overtops it by 228 ft. Or if the religious mind balked at present hard realities, apocalyptic imagination came to the rescue, and so we find the notion, witnessed to probably by Isaiah, of the future elevation of the holy mount of God to its proper physical superiority over all things that are high.

We possess also a few more details of this notion of the combination of the earthly Jerusalem with Paradise. The most important is that concerning the presence of mystical waters on the holy hill. The Garden, or Mountain, must be well watered, as in the myth of the Eden of the past. The

<sup>15</sup> Notice that, despite the gloominess of the Babylonian notions of the life after death, the "close association of the dead with the gods . . . may be regarded as a legacy of the earliest religion"; so Jastrow, *op. cit.* p. 562. This would certainly go back to the primitive animistic religion, in which the spirits of the dead were regarded as divine.

<sup>16</sup> And of course the psalmist was speaking intelligibly to people who knew what he meant.

first trace of such a mystical notion concerning Jerusalem is found in Isa. 8 6 ff., where the waters of Shiloah (the conduit from the Virgin's Spring) appear as a manifestation of Yahwe's providence. The like mysticism is further developed in Ps. 46 5, in the reference to "a river, whose streams rejoice the city of (God) Yahwe."<sup>17</sup> But, as we saw in the case of Ps. 48 2, this mysticism of faith demanded its apocalyptic consequence, for it is the province of apocalyptic to make the solution between the things which are seen and the things which are not seen. And so Ezekiel is given to see "waters issuing out from under the threshold of the house eastward," and thence proceeding in a mighty stream to sweeten the waters of the Sea of Salt (Eze. 47 1-12); and according to Zech. 14 8, "It will come to pass in that day: living waters will go out of Jerusalem," to "the eastern sea," and to "the western sea." So also Joel 4 18, "A fountain shall come forth from the house of Yahwe."<sup>18</sup> May there also exist a still closer identification of the waters in Jerusalem and those in Eden in the name of Gihon, common to a stream or watercourse in each? And may the Perat (= Euphrates), in whose waters Jeremiah was bidden to hide his girdle (Jer. 13 1 ff.), have been a water-channel in Jerusalem, mystically named after the chief river in the myth?<sup>19</sup>

<sup>17</sup> There may also be adduced Duhm's interpretation of נחל ערניך in Ps. 36 9, as containing an allusion to Eden (accepted by Gunkel and by Gressmann, who translates, "dein Edenbach"). The passage is parallel to the assertion of the future satisfaction of the saints in the fatness of God's house, while the following verse contains the originally mythical ideas of the fountain of life and the divine light.

<sup>18</sup> This apocalyptic expectation is doubtless based upon the actual spring or reservoir which lies deep below the temple, the Hammâm-es-Şifâ (Robinson, *Biblical Researches*, 1841, i. p. 508; see Stade, *Geschichte des Volkes Israel*, I. p. 334).

<sup>19</sup> The difficulty of sending the prophet on a trip to the Mesopotamian Euphrates is evident. Hence Schick has suggested the identification of פרתה with the Wâdy Fâra near Anathoth (*ZDPV*, iii. (1880), p. 11). We may notice here that Samaritan legend speaks of "the hidden river Euphrates" on Mount Gerizim; see my *Samaritans*, p. 238. The later Jewish hatred of Babylonia may have prevented the perpetuation of such an idea and name in the Holy City. It may also be observed here that Samaritan belief regards Gerizim as the original seat of Paradise and of the creation of

We find then in the apocalyptic beliefs and hopes concerning Jerusalem the mystical notion that it was the Mount of God and the destined seat of Paradise. Physically the comparatively low hill sadly lacked any correspondence to these fond beliefs. A post-exilic psalmist, in face of the fact that the mountains of the world looked askance upon Jerusalem, had to rest content with the postulate that this is Yahwe's mount (Ps. 68 17). It was therefore the necessary task of apocalyptic to remedy these physical deficiencies; Zion was to be elevated above the mountains, and the waters of the depths were to burst out from under the temple. It is to be observed that in this notion we have the combination of the mountain, the garden, and the city, all which factors are preserved in the New Testament apocalypse (Rev. 21 10 ff.).<sup>20</sup> Such a transformed city would be, at the end of days, the home of God's elect. Their felicity is painted on a large canvas in the last odes of Trito-Isaiah. This poet congenially quotes and correctly interprets (65 25) the dream of Isaiah concerning the return of the Golden Age (11 6 ff.). That apocalyptic identified the future Jerusalem with the long-lost Garden of Eden also appears in the assertions of Eze. 36 35 and Isa. 51 3 that "Canaan (or Zion) shall be as the Garden of Yahwe."

With the incoming of the belief in a resurrection these hopes became the property of all the faithful. They would rise to return to the Holy City, whence their corpses had been carried forth without the walls. No wonder is it then that we find the neighborhood of Jerusalem filled with tombs and graves. The exigencies of natural life would have turned the precincts of so ancient a city as Jerusalem

man, and as the only peak which soared above the Flood (*Samaritans*, p. 237 f.). Probably similar ideas were current concerning Jerusalem. The Samaritans, like the Jews, identify their holy mountain with the future Paradise. Robinson quotes a traditional saying of Mohammed: "The rock es-Sukhrah at Jerusalem is one of the rocks of Paradise" (*op. cit.* i. 444). Also see note 54.

<sup>20</sup> The garden, or oasis, is the nomad's ideal of Paradise, the city that of the townsman, while the mountain preserves the ancient myth of the seat of deity.



into one vast graveyard, while pious belief found a virtue in the necessity.<sup>21</sup> The most desirable place of burial was the city itself, and here originally kings, and doubtless other magnates, were interred; such interments, which seem to have been immediately adjacent to the sanctuary, were forbidden by Ezekiel's programme (Eze. 43 7 ff.). Jeremias describes a Babylonian city like Nippur as composed of three parts: the city or temple of the god, the city of the living, and the city of the dead;<sup>22</sup> the same observation might be made concerning Jerusalem and its vicinity. Indeed, we involuntarily compare this city, rising sheer above the deep gorges to the east and the south, which are tenanted by the dead, with the Babylonian conception of *E-kur*, "the mountain-house," i.e. of the world, which is represented as a mountain, beneath which lies Aralû, the Babylonian Sheol.<sup>23</sup> Even without the hope of a resurrection it must have implied some benefit to be buried near the sanctuary, just as all matters of funerary ceremony were of deepest concern to the dead. The proximity of sanctuary and burial-place and the combination, almost identification, of E-kur with Aralû, sprang from certain pious hopes of the ancients.<sup>24</sup> But all

<sup>21</sup> See Baedeker, *Syrien und Palästina* 5, pp. 92 ff., for the tombs around Jerusalem.

<sup>22</sup> A. Jeremias, *Hölle und Paradies bei den Babyloniern*, p. 13. Compare a remark of Hilprecht's that it was "only natural that the earliest inhabitants should bury their dead around the base of the *ziggurat* of Nippur to a depth of thirty to forty feet, so that the latter appears to us almost like a huge sepulchral monument," etc. (*Explorations in Bible Lands*, p. 465). However, it appears that little definite knowledge exists about the Babylonian burial of the dead in relation to the sanctuary.

<sup>23</sup> See Jastrow, *op. cit.* chap. xxv. Jeremias' suggested identification of Ariel, Isa. 29 1, etc., with Aralû (*Vorstellungen von dem Leben nach dem Tode*, p. 123) has not been accepted, but the suggestion is based upon a substantial correspondence. In connection with the reference to E-kur, which is at once the abode of the gods and of the dead, we may note the at least verbal correspondence between *הר מועד*, the Mount of Assembly (Isa. 14 13), and the epithet for Sheol as *בית מועד לכל חי*, "the house of assembly for all living" (Job 30 23).

<sup>24</sup> The hope of Ps. 36 9, "For with thee is the well of life, and in thy light shall we see light" (cf. Isa. 31 9), might have been felt by those who expected burial near Zion, even without the hope of a resurrection. The

this meant far more when the hope of the resurrection came in. Those who were fortunate enough to lie buried under the walls of Jerusalem should but rise and enter the Holy City. Perhaps selfish notions of "first come, first served" were no more lacking to ancient Judaism than to modern popular Christianity. The legend in Mt. 27 51 ff. of the saints who were raised by the earthquake coincident with the Lord's death, and who came into the city after his resurrection, naturally refers to those buried in the neighborhood of Jerusalem. The Mount of Olives became the choice cemetery for the Jews, the whole slope of the hill facing Jerusalem being now covered with Jewish graves.<sup>25</sup> This site has gained increased favor among the Jews by reason of a Rabbinic tradition, based upon the apocalyptic description in Zech. 14 4 of the rending of the Mount of Olives. The former passage reads: <sup>26</sup> "When the dead shall come to life again, the Mount of Olives shall be rent in two, and all the dead of Israel will come out from under it; yea, those righteous persons who died in captivity will be rolled under the earth, and will come forth from under the Mount of Olives." By such a fond device of the imagination were the fears of those who died in foreign lands allayed.

## II

But in contrast with the felicity of the Holy City there lies, according to Jewish tradition, right under its walls the very place of the hell of the wicked, namely the Valley (of the Son, or Sons) of Hinnom. This geographical term, as גֵּיהֶנְנוֹם or גֵּיהֶנְנוֹם alone,<sup>27</sup> in the Rabbinical literature, Γέεννα<sup>28</sup> *Gehenna*, Jahannam in the Arabic, has become a more or

application of such a verse to hopes of a joyful immortality is not without exegetical justification.

<sup>25</sup> See Baedeker, p. 97. Also on the same hill was celebrated the sacrifice of the red heifer, originally a mortuary sacrifice.

<sup>26</sup> Targum, on Song of Songs, 8 5, ed. Lagarde.

<sup>27</sup> *Erubin*, 19 a, *bis*, as hell, in distinction from Gehinnam, as the geographical locality; see Schwally, *Das Leben nach dem Tode*, p. 143.

<sup>28</sup> For the occurrence of Γέεννα in the apocalyptic literature, see Volz, *Jüdische Eschatologie*, p. 289.

less dominant name for the hell of the wicked in all the three religions which trace their traditions back to the Old Testament.

It is not necessary to discuss here at length the identifications of the Valley of Hinnom,—whether it be the Kidron Valley, that of the Tyropœon, or the Wâdy-er-Rabâbi. As Warren says:<sup>29</sup> “Whatever view is taken of the position of the valley of Hinnom, all writers concur in its extending to the junction of the three valleys of Jerusalem below Siloam, *i.e.* there must be one spot below Siloam which all agree in making a portion of the Valley of Hinnom.” Now it appears from all the traditions that it was at least with the neighborhood of this point that the notion of hell was connected. The earliest evidence for this localization of Gehenna is *Enoch*, ch. 26 f., a passage which appears to have been generally overlooked in the geographical discussions of our point, although in it we are given a bit of real geography.<sup>30</sup> The seer comes to the middle (*i.e.* the navel) of the earth: “There I saw a holy mount, and under the mount a water (*i.e.* Siloam), which flowed to the east of it in a southerly direction. Toward the east I saw another mountain much higher than this one (*i.e.* the Mount of Olives), between them a deep and narrow valley (*i.e.* Kidron), and through it ran a stream below the mount. West from this was another mountain (*i.e.* the Mount of Evil Counsel), lower than that and not high; between them was a deep and dry valley, and another deep and dry valley lay at the end of the three mountains. All valleys are deep,” etc. “Then I said: To what purpose is this blest land, which is full of trees, and to what purpose this accursed valley in the midst?” He learns that it is the abode of the rebels against God, and that here “in the last time they will serve as a drama of a righteous judgment before the righteous for all eternity,” etc.<sup>31</sup> There is some confusion in the description of the

<sup>29</sup> Hastings, *Dict. of the Bible*, s.v. Hinnom, ii., p. 385 b.

<sup>30</sup> I observe that Dalman notices it in his article *Gehenna*, in *PRE*<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>31</sup> From G. Beer's translation, in Kautzsch, *Apokryphen und Pseudepigraphen*, ii. p. 255, with adoption of his geographical identifications.

valleys, but their centre of gravity, the place of perdition, is the valley that "lay at the end of the three mountains," i.e. the point of confluence of the valleys around Jerusalem. This place would then be the end of the Kidron valley, the head of the Wâdy en-Nâr which continues it.<sup>32</sup>

Further, according to Jerome, Tophet, the seat of the Melek cult, "is watered by the springs of Siloam";<sup>33</sup> and Eusebius connects Tophet with Akeldama,<sup>34</sup> which tradition places on the slope of the Mount of Evil Counsel. For our present purpose, then, it is sufficient to note that Gê-Hinnôm, so far as it connotes the Melek cult of the Old Testament and the hell of later theology, is connected with the conjunction of the valleys to the south of the eastern hill.<sup>35</sup>

But how did this Valley of Hinnom become the seat of hell to the Jewish imagination? The question cannot be said to have been adequately answered. With the common sense which often characterizes Jewish commentators, Kimchi says<sup>36</sup> that the place was the dump of the city, where fires were always kept burning to destroy the refuse; "therefore the judgment of the wicked is parabolically called Gehenna." But from the Biblical references the place appears to have had nothing physically objectionable about it; in contrast to its contemporary condition Jeremiah prophesied that it would one day be called "Valley of Slaughter" (7 32), and Jerome speaks of it as *amoenus atque nemorosus hodieque hortorum praebebat delicias*.<sup>37</sup> Or it has been supposed that the sacrificial fires of Melek which burned in that place were taken by the Jews as typical of the fiery torments of

<sup>32</sup> Warren, *l.c.*, includes this wady and the Kidron under the common term Gê-Hinnôm; hence נַחַל would apply to the whole gorge, נַחַל to the upper Kidron alone.

<sup>33</sup> *Comm. in Jer.* 7 31.

<sup>34</sup> *Onom.* s.v. Θαφειθ.

<sup>35</sup> May we explain the King's Vale, עֵמֶק הַמֶּלֶךְ, Gen. 14 17, 2 Sam. 18 18, as the Vale of Melek? Warren in the article cited, p. 388 a, is inclined to locate this place at the conjunction of the valleys, and defends the use of עֵמֶק from Jer. 31 39.

<sup>36</sup> On Ps. 27, cited by Driver, Hastings, *DB*, ii. p. 119.

<sup>37</sup> *Comm. in Jer.* 7 31.

hell; so Robinson: "It was probably in allusion to this detested and abominable fire that the later Jews applied the name of this valley (Gehenna), to denote the place of future punishment or the fires of hell."<sup>38</sup> Here, then, would be an instance of the sardonic Hebrew humor which so easily found innuendoes in the words and things of God's enemies to the confusion of the latter; the turning of Melek's fires into those of hell was hoisting the enemy with his own petard. Dalman is inclined to deduce the combination of Gê-Hinnôm with the fires of hell from Isa. 30 33, with its threat of the *tophet* prepared for the king of Assyria.<sup>39</sup> But serious dogmas, like those concerning hell, could not have been developed from accidental relations, or have been built upon solitary Biblical passages or *jeux d'esprit*. Schwally<sup>40</sup> gives as two reasons for the localization of hell near Jerusalem the desire to unite them both at the middle point, the navel, of the earth, and the purpose to provide for the saints the spectacle of the torments of the damned.<sup>41</sup> These reasons catch the spirit of Jewish eschatology, but are inadequate to explain why Gê-Hinnôm became Gehenna. The proper method is first of all to examine if the latter idea may not be traced back to notions and myths connected with the Valley of Hinnom from primitive times.

To begin at the widest circle and to work in toward the centre, we first examine the general geography of the vicinity of Jerusalem. For just as the hill nature of Jerusalem helped to identify that city with the mythical Mount of God in the north (far better than was the case for the

<sup>38</sup> *Op. cit.* i. 404; so also Baudissin, *PRE*<sup>3</sup>, xiii. p. 281.

<sup>39</sup> *PRE*<sup>3</sup>, vi. p. 419.

<sup>40</sup> *Op. cit.* p. 142.

<sup>41</sup> Hell is generally, with good reason, placed at a long distance from Paradise, unless some deeply founded tradition unites them. The more general notion of the wide separation of the two places is combined with the localization of hell in the Valley of Hinnom by the later Jewish tradition through the dictum that this place contained one of the gates of hell. The primitive Jewish juxtaposition of Paradise and hell is revived in the *Kabala*, — only a wall dividing the two; but here hell has become an intermediate purgatory (Weber, *Jüdische Theologie*, p. 341).

identification of the low ziggurats of Babylonia with the Mountain of the World), so the physical contour and character of the country surrounding Jerusalem may have contributed to localizing hell in the same vicinity.

Now Jerusalem is by nature a forepost toward the desert. Lines drawn therefrom to Jericho, and through Bethlehem to Hebron and beyond, mark off a veritable chaos of nature: rugged and barren hills, horrible gorges,—the wilderness of Judah,<sup>42</sup> and at the bottom the most ill-omened lake in the world, the Sea of Salt, the Lake of Pitch. The country to the east and the south of Jerusalem must have affected the conceptions of the Jerusalemites in much the same way as the desert to the west of the Babylonians colored the mythology of the latter, to whose eyes this desert was the home of all evil demons.<sup>43</sup> In general, the desert was the continuation of the primeval chaos, with which the doctrine of a hell of the damned is genetically connected.<sup>44</sup> It is not strange to find that the Jews were led to place their hell next door to the Holy City, in the region so appropriate to that horrid idea. Indeed, if the new Jerusalem was to restore the actual conditions of primitive Paradise, then just without its gates should lie the uncultivated wastes of the earth—the like of those into which an Adam or a Cain was driven. In general, the eschatological expectations of a formal nature (Eze. 47 f.; Zech. 14 10) looked for a reconstitution of the whole of the Holy Land, whereby it would be made altogether fertile and habitable. But the less systematic schemes for the future probably left the rest of the world out of consideration, the holy mount alone being the objective of pious hopes; Jerusalem would stand in the midst of the chaos which surrounded it, that region “without,” where according to Rev. 22 15 all evil things will have their habitat. Thither “those who escape” would be gathered, as

<sup>42</sup> For a description of this rarely explored country and a register of its early monasteries, which arose here as naturally as in the Nitrian desert, see the notes of Schick, as presented by Marti in *ZDPV*, iii. pp. 1 ff.

<sup>43</sup> Jeremias, *Hölle und Paradies*, pp. 14, 18.

<sup>44</sup> Compare the Book of Revelation with the Babylonian legends of creation.

to the sole haven of refuge (Joel 3 5). Thus both mythology and geographical conditions contributed to the localization of hell close by the final Paradise, and the dramatic unity obtained for the *dénouement* of the eschatological drama is based on long-standing notions.

More than one point exhibits the uncanny nature of Jerusalem's vicinity. To the east was the seat of the demon Azazel,<sup>45</sup> who in the later apocalyptic is identified with Satan and ranks as prince of hell.<sup>46</sup> Into this same wilderness Jesus was led up to be tempted by the devil and to have fellowship with the wild beasts. Here St. Saba had his adventure with the lion, and his monastery remains a penitentiary for recalcitrant monks.<sup>47</sup> The Dead Sea, remarkably enough, has left but slight traces on Old Testament eschatology; directly, it appears only in the repeated warnings drawn from the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah. The references to pitch and sulphur as factors in the day of judgment (*e.g.* Isa. 30 33 34 9) are doubtless drawn from the horrors of that body of water. Its first direct connection with the idea of hell appears in *Enoch* 67 4 ff., where, with a grim play on their warm baths in its neighborhood, it is assigned as the future place of torment for the magnates of the earth. In Rev. 20 10 the Dead Sea is the prototype of the hellish lake of fire and brimstone. We also recall Renan's emendation of עֵמֶק הַשְּׂרָיִם, Gen. 14 13, into הַשְּׂרָיִם, the Valley of Demons.<sup>48</sup>

To the southwest of Jerusalem lay another mystical region, the Valley of Rephaim, now generally identified with the valley leading toward Bethlehem, although it may have been the vale to the west of the city. The place may have been associated with some form of the primitive myth of the Titans,<sup>49</sup> who are always represented as in conflict with

<sup>45</sup> According to *Yoma*, vi. 8, at Beth Hadudo, identified by Schick with the modern Bet-hudedon (*ZDPV*, iii. pp. 214 ff.).

<sup>46</sup> Volz, *op. cit.* pp. 76 ff., 285, 291.

<sup>47</sup> Baedeker, pp. 179 f.

<sup>48</sup> *Histoire du peuple d'Israël*<sup>9</sup>, i. p. 116. For the "local coloring" of Jewish eschatology drawn from this region, see Gressmann, *op. cit.* pp. 38 ff.

<sup>49</sup> The Rephaim were a gigantic folk, Dt. 2 20 f.

the creator God. These fabulous beings appear in Gen. 6 4.<sup>50</sup> This valley may reasonably be identified with Joel's Valley of Jehoshaphat, and Valley of Decision (Joel 4 2. 12. 14), in which should be enacted the eschatological antitype of the original struggle between Yahwe and his adversaries.<sup>51</sup> Certainly Joel cannot have created absolutely new terms in these mystic references; he must have been speaking to current beliefs.<sup>52</sup> Hence we may connect the whole of the Armageddon series of traditions with the ancient mythical associations of the Valley of Rephaim.

Approaching closer to the objective of our argument, we come upon the deep gorges that lie under Jerusalem to the east and south. If, as argued above, Zion became identified with the mythical Mount of God, then naturally those deep ravines would have suggested Sheol, lying at the roots of the Mountain of the World.<sup>53</sup> In these ravines reposed untold numbers of the city's dead, rejoicing in their proximity to the joys of the Last Days, or expecting their resurrection and reëtrance into the glorified life of the Holy City. The very geography of Jerusalem and its vicinity suggested the spatial relations of heaven and Sheol, which are naturally opposed as relatively above and below.

<sup>50</sup> The so-called Kuthæan legend of creation (King, *Seven Tablets of Creation*, i. pp. 140 ff.) has been interpreted as referring to a brood of Titans, suckled by Tiāmat; see A. Jeremias, *s.v. Nergal*, in Roscher's *Lexicon*, col. 266. But King rightly denies that we have here a myth of creation or the deluge.

<sup>51</sup> Cheyne (*Enc. Bib.* ii. p. 2383) thinks that this identification is possible. The term עמק cannot refer to the upper Kidron gorge, while a broad valley would be necessary for the development of the contending forces in the great struggle. The Valley of Rephaim was a classic battlefield, the scene of David's annihilation of the Philistine power (2 Sam. 5). Against this identification is the connection made between the Mount of Olives and Yahwe's appearing for judgment in Zech. 14 3 f. But there may have been various local myths.

<sup>52</sup> So with Gressmann, *op. cit.* p. 187, against the commentators on Joel.

<sup>53</sup> I find, after the completion of this paper, that my argument in this respect has been briefly sketched by Halévy in the *Revue archéologique*, nouvelle série, xl. (1882), p. 52. His argument seems to have been overlooked, so that my development of the same idea may not be idle repetition.



At the deepest point below Jerusalem, where those two ravines unite to form the fearful gorge which leads down past the monastery of Mar Saba to the Dead Sea, Jewish theology located the mouth of the hell of the wicked, which took its name Gehenna from that locality.<sup>54</sup> It seems as if it required but the introduction of the notion of an ethical discrimination in the fate of the dead<sup>55</sup> for a people like the Jews, sternly moral and full of hatred toward sinners, to locate somewhere in the uncanny neighborhood of their holy city the very place for the wicked dead. It may have arisen out of a poetic naturalism that this hell was located at the deepest point in this region, just south of Jerusa-

<sup>54</sup> We may note the different tradition that is contained in *Erubin*, 19 a: "There are three gates to Gehenna: one in the desert, and one in the sea, and one in Jerusalem." The latter point is then proved from Isa. 31 9. With this notion is to be compared the tradition in the Mishna, *Yoma*, v. 2, of the stone which was in the Holy of Holies, since the time that the ark was carried away, and which was called Foundation (תִּיבִּיט). Strack, *ad loc.*, adduces Targum Yerushalmi to Ex. 28 30, which speaks of this stone as the one with which God stopped up the mouth of the great deep at the beginning of things. This is a repetition of the E-kur theme, and is a trace of the legend which appears in Ezekiel and Zechariah concerning the waters which will well forth from under the temple. The stone is doubtless es-Sakhra, and again we may compare a Biblical reference: "Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone of sure foundation" (Isa. 28 16). As in the case of the waters of Shiloah, the prophet is making mystical use of popular ideas. Barclay in his *City of the Great King*, pp. 498 f., tells of the Muslim legend that in the hollow under the Sakhra is the Well of Souls, which was formerly kept open in order to hold intercourse with spirits. (Also see Baedeker, p. 45.) Thus we find all grades of ideas relating to the lower world connected with this stone. Among the Haram cisterns Schick enumerates the Bir el-Janne, i.e. that of Paradise (*Die Stiftshütte und der Tempel*, p. 302).

<sup>55</sup> The date of the rise of such a notion may no longer be dogmatically assigned to a late period; it is altogether doubtful whether such doctrines can be submitted to dates. Note the fate of the figure in Isa. 14 19, and the picture of the condition in Hades of the uncircumcised nations, Eze. 32 17 ff. These representations are mythological in form, hence far older than the dates of the compositions in question. For the approach of the Babylonian religion toward the same theory, see Jeremias, *Vorstellungen*, p. 75 f.; *Hölle und Paradies*, pp. 16, 32 (although other scholars, like Jastrow and Zimmern, differ in this from Jeremias). Popular notions must always have preceded the adoption of such tenets into the formal theology; see Schwally, *op. cit.* p. 151.

lem; <sup>56</sup> likewise the lower one goes the worse is the hell, *e.g.* Isa. 14 19, where the wicked king is thrust down under the dead to the bottom of the pit.<sup>57</sup> But was it mere accident that this chosen spot was also the site of the worship of Melek, the King-god?

It is not necessary to treat at length the theme of Melek, which has called forth elaborate and well-nigh exhaustive discussions.<sup>58</sup> But I would call attention to a suggestion made by Gressmann<sup>59</sup> which gives the key to the character of that deity, at least with respect to his aspect in the cult of the Valley of Hinnom. Gressmann describes Melek as "a chthonic firegod." The definition illuminates two of our problems. It explains the characteristically fiery<sup>60</sup> and inhuman nature of the Melek cult, which is vouched for in widely separated parts of the Phœnician world. And it explains why this worship was celebrated in particular at the site which is so repulsive to the Old Testament mind; namely, at the opening of the gorge leading down to the Dead Sea, a place fit for the rites of a subterranean deity.<sup>61</sup> In this connection we observe the fact, generally ignored in the discussions of the subject,<sup>62</sup> that this gorge, which is the continuation of the river bed of the Kidron, is now called the Wâdy en-Nâr, the Valley of Fire. The name may be an Arabic creation based upon the Jewish traditions connected with the locality, "fire" being the well-known Muslim equivalent for "hellfire." But it may possibly be a survival

<sup>56</sup> Not only is hell generally pictured as a valley in the Jewish apocalyptic (Volz, *op. cit.* p. 289), but the same is also true of the Persian eschatology.

<sup>57</sup> The picture is taken from the burial *en masse* of the enemies slain on a battlefield.

<sup>58</sup> See especially Moore, *s.v.* *Molech*, in *Enc. Bib.*, and Baudissin, *s.v.* *Moloch*, in *PRE*<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>59</sup> *Op. cit.* p. 34.

<sup>60</sup> His worship required a *tophet* (?), *i.e.* a pyre.

<sup>61</sup> The mysteries which according to Isa. 57 5 were celebrated in valleys and caves are probably to be located here. In Græco-Roman mythology we may compare the cave Avernus in the volcanic neighborhood of Cumæ and the deep rift on the slope of Areopagus, where were celebrated the rites of Pluton; see Roscher's *Lexicon*, *s.v.* *Hades*, col. 1790.

<sup>62</sup> I see that the suggestion has already appeared in Baedeker, p. 100.

of the ancient name of the gorge, and so have been originally connected with the local Melek cult and ideas.<sup>63</sup>

The chthonic nature of this deity is also set forth in his name; he is a King, and that, too, with more real meaning than is implied in the kingship of a celestial god, for all men at last become his subjects. This idea is preserved in the Old Testament, where death appears as "the king of terrors" (Job 18 13). So also Nergal, the chthonic god of the Babylonians, has for his standing title the paronomasia Ne-urugal, "lord of the great world," *i.e.* of Hades. He is given the title "king" (šarru) in the phrases, "king of the abyss," "king of the river," "king of the water-house," all with reference to his underworld domain.<sup>64</sup> Also the primitive feminine deity Allatu, who doubtless preceded Nergal in general acceptance, appears as "Queen Allatu."<sup>65</sup> One striking verbal correspondence connecting the Palestinian Melek with the Babylonian ideas of hell is found in Isa. 57 9: "And thou travellest (?) to the King (*lammelek*) with oil, and makest many thy perfumes; and thou sendest thy ambassadors afar (עַד מְרוֹחַיִק), yea, deep down to Sheol." The Hebrew phrase quoted is identical with the Babylonian *ana irsitim rūkti*, used of Hades.<sup>66</sup> Also in the Greek mythology Hades is King *par excellence*, and his emblem is the scepter.<sup>67</sup>

That the king of the lower world was associated with the element of fire, as so peculiarly in the Melek cult, was doubtless due to the observation of physical phenomena in volcanic and bituminous regions. Kutha may have been

<sup>63</sup> Perhaps in Mâlik, who appears in the Koran as the prince of hell (Sûra xliii. 77), we have the trace of the ancient Arabian cult of Melek.

<sup>64</sup> Jeremias, *Vorstellungen*, p. 67. Of course correspondence with Melek in the Babylonian is not to be sought in the theme MLK, but in the corresponding name for royalty. Thus Baudissin's argument that no Babylonian god corresponds to the Canaanitish Melek is almost purely philological (*op. cit.* p. 274).

<sup>65</sup> Šarrat, *e.g.* in Ishtar's Descent to Hades, lines 24, 25, 28. Her name, or that of her double, Erishkigal, means Mistress of the Great Land.

<sup>66</sup> Passages are cited by Jensen, *op. cit.* p. 226; Jeremias, *op. cit.* p. 64.

<sup>67</sup> Roscher's *Lexicon*, *s.v.* *Hades*, col. 1780.

the site of some such manifestation, which gave character to its local deity Nergal. No igneous traces are found in the Kidron Valley, but this lack is indifferent; the volcanic regions to the south and east of Palestine, the hot springs in that land, especially in the neighborhood of the Dead Sea, would naturally have associated the subterranean deity with the element of fire.<sup>68</sup> To be sure, the custom of sacrificing human victims as holocausts to Melek would not prove that Melek was a fire-god, for fire was the usual medium of sacrifice. But when we take into consideration the points suggested above, and also the early Jewish association of a fiery hell with Melek's cult in the Valley of Hinnom, we are irresistibly drawn to the conclusion that the fire of his sacrifices was peculiarly characteristic of his nature. Moore holds<sup>69</sup> that the victim was always first slain and then burnt; but I cannot see that the testimony to this point is "abundant and unambiguous." The *tophet*, the pyre, recalls an Indian suttee, and there may have been some merit in a sacrifice which caused the victims to pass, as it were, alive into the domain of the god who claimed them.<sup>70</sup> Many other qualities than those of hideous kind doubtless originally belonged to Melek; he combined therewith the character of god of fertility, according to the usual double nature of chthonic deities, *e.g.* Nergal, Pluto-Pluton. But these benevolent characteristics may have been usurped by the Baals and by Yahwe, finally leaving to Melek the awful qualities alone. In the special local cult we are now concerned with, the wild character of the lower Kidron gorge may have peculiarly brought about there this specialization of his functions.

The question of the identity of Melek and Yahwe has been frequently and elaborately discussed.<sup>71</sup> Their original

<sup>68</sup> See Gressmann, *op. cit.* p. 6.

<sup>69</sup> *Op cit.* col. 3184 f.

<sup>70</sup> Cf. the "going down alive into Sheol" of Korah and his company, Num. 16 31.

<sup>71</sup> See the bibliography in Baudissin's article, p. 269, and also p. 295, and Nowack, *Lehrbuch der hebräischen Archäologie*, p. 306. The former minimizes to the utmost the identification of Yahwe and Melek, but it is difficult

identity is now no longer claimed. If we follow our clue, we find them on the whole distinguished in this that Yahwe is a celestial, meteorological deity; Melek is terrestrial, chthonic. Fiery characteristics are indeed common to both, but then these belong equally to the two spheres of sky and earth. Hence we may not adduce, in the effort at comparison between Yahwe and Melek, those passages in which Yahwe is described as a light and a flame, *e.g.* Isa. 10 17 30 27 ff. 31 9.<sup>72</sup> In his original theophany to Israel on Horeb he appears as a volcanic god;<sup>73</sup> but in this and in his manifestations as a pillar of fire, and his seraphs (the lightnings), he is rather a celestial than a terrestrial deity. Likewise in his visitation of Sodom and Gomorrah he rained fire and brimstone upon them from heaven; the Melek doctrine would probably have emphasized subterranean fires. Exceptions to this general distinction are the Burning Bush, and the process of fire from Yahwe in Num. 16 35. That there was an assimilation of the two deities in Canaan cannot be doubted; the closer Yahwe approached to solity in the belief of his people, the more would the cults of the other deities be pressed into his service, except for the restraining influences of conservatism or reform.

In this connection we may notice the obscure passage, Isa. 30 33, in which the notion of Yahwe is combined with the sphere of ideas belonging to Melek. The verse reads: "For a pyre (תִּפְתִּיחַ) is already prepared; yea, for the King it is made ready,—deep and wide; the pile thereof is fire and much wood; the breath of Yahwe like a river of brim-

to resist the arguments advanced by other scholars, *e.g.* Moore, that the Melek sacrifices were offered to Yahwe. However, this does not prove original identity or similarity.

<sup>72</sup> On the other hand, Nergal combines within himself both celestial and terrestrial attributes. I may cite here, as reminiscent of the notions connected with Nergal, Hab. 3 5: "Before him goes the pestilence (דִּבְרָא, cf. Dibbarra), and fares forth the thunderbolt at his feet."

<sup>73</sup> See Gunkel, *Deutsche Lit. Ztg.*, 1903, col. 3058 f.; Bewer, *Stud. u. Krit.* 1904, pp. 469 ff.; E. Meyer, *Die Israeliten und ihre Nachbarstämme*, p. 69. According to a note of Cheyne's in *Traditions and Beliefs of Ancient Israel*, p. 528, the traveller Beke appears to have been the first to make this suggestion.

stone kindles it." It is most attractive to identify "the King" with Melek,<sup>74</sup> but the context undoubtedly implies the king of Assyria.<sup>75</sup> At all events the former interpretation is true in finding a reference to the Melek cult in the use of the words "pyre" and "the king." An interpretation satisfying the text and the context may be gained by supposing that the prophet is making sardonic use of ideas and terms connected with Melek. He has turned the dative of the phrase appropriate to that cult, "a pyre prepared for Melek,"<sup>76</sup> into a *dativus incommodi*, and so applies it to the Assyrian king. And there is yet further connection with the Melek theology, for the reference is not to a secular pyre, but to a mystical fire of torment, the fire of hell. The king of Assyria would then be, like the prince of Tyre (Eze. 28), and the incarnate figure in Isa. 14, the representative of his people, who, like the latter, is to suffer punishment in hell. If this interpretation be correct, and the passage be Isaianic, we have in it the earliest Biblical reference to hellfire.<sup>77</sup> We must suppose that the Melek cult in the neighborhood of Jerusalem exerted a powerful impression upon the Hebrew imagination, if the prophet Isaiah could use its terms in this free fashion.

I have already touched upon some correspondence between Melek and Nergal in the respective mythologies of Canaan and Babylonia. May we go still further, and assert that Melek was Nergal, and that his cult is the lineal descendant of the worship of Nergal in the neighborhood of Jerusalem?<sup>78</sup> Zimmermann has broached the possibility of Nergal's influence upon the Jewish conception of hell, although with-

<sup>74</sup> So Cheyne, *Isaiah* <sup>3</sup>; Delitzsch, *Jesaja* <sup>4</sup>; Kittel-Dillmann <sup>6</sup>, Gressmann, *op. cit.* p. 39.

<sup>75</sup> So Delitzsch <sup>3</sup>, Dillmann, and apparently Moore, *op. cit.* p. 3186.

<sup>76</sup> The same verb is used of the erection of an altar, e.g. Ezra 3 6.

<sup>77</sup> Cheyne, in his *Introduction to Isaiah*, pp. 199 ff. (following Guthe, Smend, and Hackmann), considers vv. 27-33 to be post-exilic. Duhm holds that נֶגַהּ דָּוִד לְמֶלֶךְ is a gloss; but his metrical argument is not convincing. Marti observes that the notion of Gehenna is presented here, and therefore argues that the passage cannot be earlier than the second century.

<sup>78</sup> For traces of the Nergal cult in Syria, see Jeremias, in *PRE* <sup>3</sup>, s.v. *Nergal*.

out reference to Melek. He says:<sup>79</sup> "It is very probable that the figure of the Babylonian god of the kingdom of death and of *Fieberglut* has in many respects to be regarded as the prototype of the late Jewish god of hell, who was simply taken over by Christendom, though withal other figures, such as that of the Persian Ahriman, may have coöperated. Especially also the representation of hellfire could easily be deduced from this, that Nergal, the god of the kingdom of death, was thought of at the same time as the god of the glowing heat of the sun, of *Fieberglut*, as a raging firegod."

The hypothesis of the one time identity of the Canaanite Melek of the Valley of Hinnom and of Nergal would be attractive. We recall that Nergal's double, the solar deity Ninib, possessed, in the Tell-Amarna period, a shrine in or near Jerusalem.<sup>80</sup> That Nergal, the god of the baneful southern sun, should also have had his rites in the same neighborhood, is not unlikely, and the gorge of Hinnom may well have been their site.<sup>81</sup> In this case Zimmern's suggestion would be approved; the notion of Gehenna would go back genetically and locally to the cult of the Babylonian firegod, transported in early days to Canaan. How-

<sup>79</sup> *KAT*<sup>3</sup>, p. 415.

<sup>80</sup> Winckler's edition of the Letters, no. 185. Haupt holds (*SBOT, Joshua*, Eng. tr. p. 54) that Bit-Ninib is Jerusalem; this is against the interpretation of Winckler and Knudtzon, and also of Zimmern, *KAT*<sup>3</sup>, p. 411. We may note Clay's recent valuable discovery of the equation of Ninib and En-Martu, the Lord of the Westland (*Journ. Am. Or. Soc.* xxviii. p. 135). There may be a survival of the god's cult in the horses of the sun dedicated by the kings of Judah, 2 Ki. 23 11, and in the sacrosanct eastern gate of the temple in Ezekiel's programme, the east appearing to have been Ninib's special domain (see Jensen, *op. cit.* p. 457). The pig, which was sacrificed by renegades after the Exile (Isa. 65 & 66 s), was sacred to Ninib (see *KAT*<sup>3</sup>, p. 409 f.).

<sup>81</sup> The original chthonic nature of Nergal is maintained by Barton (*Semitic Origins*, p. 216), as against Jensen, Jastrow, and Zimmern. Barton's reasonable hypothesis would increase the likeness between Nergal and Melek. The chief objection against it is the myth of Nergal's overcoming and marrying Erishkigal, which would point to a translation of the former to the lower world. This myth, however, may have syncretistic origin, explaining how the local chthonic god of Kutha became the god of Hades in the pantheon.

ever, there is no reason to doubt that the latter land possessed its own chthonic firegod, and we need go no farther than to suppose that Babylonian theology may have influenced the Melek cult.<sup>82</sup>

It appears, then, to the writer that the Jewish theologoumenon of Gehenna may be regarded as autochthonous and original, so far as these adjectives may be applied to any religious ideas. We have seen that in the deep gorge below Jerusalem was worshipped a fierce nature deity, of chthonic, fiery character. The site of the cult was within the great mortuary district of the Holy City, and Melek was the king of the dead. Moreover, the region was one admirably fitted by nature and myth for an Inferno corresponding to the earthly Paradise of the future Jerusalem. How early the notion of the relation between Melek's element of fire and the pains of hell came in, cannot be ascertained. The earliest possible reference thereto is Isa. 30 33, belonging to the eighth century B.C. The pains of hell also appear in Deutero-Isaiah (Isa. 50 11): "In pain ye will couch." Our knowledge of Babylonian theology concerning the lower world is too fragmentary either to throw light upon Babylonian ideas on the subject, or, by comparison, to infer the theology prevalent in Canaan. There can be little doubt that from early times there existed the notion of certain distinctions in hell, and it would not have been a long step for a higher ethical sense to project into the other world the moral distinctions made in this world. The time arrived in Judaism when the belief in the resurrection established the doctrine of compensations after death. If the saints of the future were to enjoy Paradise in Zion, and those who were dead were to be raised to life again and enter the gates of the Holy City, then the notion of hellfire associated from primitive times with the local Melek cult, would naturally

<sup>82</sup> In this connection the following equation may be suggested. The obscure reference in Am. 5 28 may be translated "Sakkûth, your king (melek), and Kêwân, your images." Now Sakkûth-Kêwân is probably Saturn, and Nergal was at one time identified with Saturn (see *KAT*<sup>3</sup>, pp. 410, 413), with which equation we may compare the other, Melek = Kronos-Saturn (Moore, *op. cit.* p. 3189); hence Nergal = Melek.



adapt itself to the requirements of sinners. The deep gorge below Jerusalem was capitably suited for the site of hell; the fires of its deity suggested the kind of punishment. And so we have in Isa. 66 25 the first sure representation of the notion of Gehenna. The dead sinners remain dead,—it is their corpses which are consumed by the unquenchable fire and the insatiable worm. But their spirits, according to ancient animistic notions, are still related to their bodies, and hence they are sensible of the physical torment. The picture is not developed; it doubtless spoke to well-established ideas. Probably the mouth of hell was regarded as open, in which, like a charnel-house (בֵּיִר *pît, cistern*), lay heaped the corpses of the wicked dead. It was a further step to the notion of the resurrection of the wicked, also to the last grand assize (Dan. 12 2). This development came in with the spiritualization of Jewish eschatology, when the final scene came to be more mystically conceived. But in the earlier Judaism it consorted with the Hebrew genius that the whole drama of the Latter Days should have its theatre about Jerusalem.

The above thesis attempts to show the genetic development of the idea of Gehenna as a logical product of the Jewish soil. Unless we suppose such a native development, we have no quarter from which to explain the notion of hellfire. The references to this kind of torment in the Zoroastrian literature are exceedingly scant, and not of prime importance. In the Pahlavi *Artâi Virâf* there is reference to streams of glowing metal which form, along with cold and other evils, one of hell's torments.<sup>83</sup> It is to be remembered that fire was the sacred element of the Persians, and hence it played too small a part in their idea of hell to have materially affected Jewish theology.

<sup>83</sup> See Hübschmann, *Die persische Lehre vom Jenseits u. jüngsten Gericht*, in *Jahrbücher f. Protestantische Theologie*, 1879, pp. 222 f. The Essene, and also apocalyptic, doctrine of a cold hell is probably of Persian origin; see Josephus, *B. J.* ii. 8, 11; *Enoch*, 100, 13; *Test. Levi*, 3; cf. also Dante's lowest hell.